

was not stiated by increasing years or increasing wealth, but grew rather with his means and his habit of exercising it ; a man of ardent patriotism, he identified his own life with that of his country ; of an ever generous and ready public spirit, he was in all relations a good citizen ; religious, not without profession, but without cant, and beneficent without ostentation ; his character, like his person, was of a noble and massive rather than of a graceful make. He was every inch a man.

And now, should it be thought that I have but followed the example of all manufacturers of obituaries, dealing only in loose and empty panegyric, I do not plead guilty to the charge. What has been said rather falls short of the truth than transgresses it.

If it be suggested that, after all, this certainly cannot be so very extraordinary a case, that Mr. Merrick was not so very great or remarkable a man, for we have among us every day many men quite as great, as good, and as useful as he, I cannot by any means concur in the suggestion ; and yet I do believe, and rejoice to believe, that we have more good, earnest, public spirited, sagacious and energetic men, quietly working on among us, than we are sometimes, in our habitual querulousness, disposed to acknowledge. Amidst all our complaints, often unreasoning and inconsiderate complaints, of the degeneracy and corruption of the times, there is more of real greatness and goodness around us than we are aware of. Great and good men have not all passed away with the former generations. They are with us still. And it is one of the lessons we may learn from a review of such a life as Mr. Merrick's, to see and recognise the treasures we possess. If we have many such men as Mr. Merrick, let us rejoice ; let us so look to them while they live, and so remember them when they are gone, that by all means we may have more.

An Obituary Notice of FRANKLIN PEALE:

Read before the American Philosophical Society, December 16th, 1870, by
ROBERT PATTERSON.

At the meeting of the American Philosophical Society, held February 19th, 1796, the proceedings were diversified by a singular incident, which we find thus recorded in the minutes:

“Mr. Peale presented to the Society a young son of four months and four days old, being the first child born in the Philosophical Hall, and requested that the Society would give him a name. On which, the Society unanimously agreed that, after the name of the chief founder and late President of the Society he should be named FRANKLIN.” Tradition adds, that the infant was thereupon so named in the President's chair, given to the Society by Benjamin Franklin.

This child, in a peculiar sense the child of the Society, was FRANKLIN PEALE, our late associate, to whose memory I now, honored by your choice, seek to render a feeble tribute.

The father of Franklin Peale was Charles Wilson Peale, a man of various gifts, but eminent as a painter, and as the founder of the once

noted Philadelphia Museum. To him the country owes an extensive series of portraits of the most distinguished men of our revolutionary and post-revolutionary era. In the course of his profession, having been called on to make drawings of bones of the mammoth, his attention became attracted to natural history, and he began the accumulation of objects illustrating that department of science.* From very small beginnings, Wilson Peale, by energy, enthusiasm and self-sacrifice above all praise, succeeded in building up the Museum referred to, which Philadelphians of a past generation recall as one of the most interesting and useful institutions of our city. He was a member of our Society—which was naturally much interested in the success of his work—whence it happened that, while the Museum was still in its early stage of growth, in the year 1794, it was located in our building, the same which we now occupy; and here, in the northwest room, second story, now known as the Librarian's room, FRANKLIN PEALE was born, on the 15th day of October, 1795. His mother was Elizabeth De Peyster, second wife of Charles Wilson Peale. She died while he was quite young, but his childhood and youth were tenderly cared for by a stepmother, Wilson Peale's third wife, a member of the Society of Friends.

The father's views on the subject of education were peculiar. The children were not directed according to any systematic routine, but left much to their own choice in their course of study. They were guided according to a fancied ability, and means were furnished (but not always the teachers) to stimulate them to the acquisition of the knowledge towards which their minds seemed naturally bent. Books, tools, canvas, and pencils, besides the opportunities to see what had been done by others, he thought sufficient, provided there was a disposition to learn; otherwise he considered any attempt to push them forward as but lost time. If such a plan of education seems open to criticism, it may, perhaps, be justified by the result, which has furnished to us, in the Peale family, Rembrandt, the artist; Franklin, the mechanician; and Titian, the naturalist.

The instruction received by Mr. Peale seems, therefore, to have been quite irregular. He had no systematic course of training, either in school or college. He went first to a country school in Bucks County, was a short time at the University of Pennsylvania, and finished his education at the Academy in Germantown, where the family then resided.

The bent of Mr. Peale's genius towards mechanics was developed at a very early period. While quite young, he became distinguished as a manufacturer of all the usual apparatus for games, and many curious toys. As a school boy, he demonstrated a fondness for surveying as well as mechanics—in the interval of school hours surveying his father's farm near Germantown, and developing also the water power of some neighboring streams.

* I may be pardoned, I trust, the mention of the fact, since it illustrates a family friendship, extending now through several generations, that the first article presented to Mr. Peale, and the earliest encouragement of his project, was from Robert Patterson, a former President of the Society, and the grandfather of the writer.

At the age of 17, he entered the factory of Hodgson & Bro., on the Brandywine, Delaware, to learn machine making. From his industry, patience and neatness, he rose superior to his teachers. He became skilful as a turner and founder, and in the use of tools, and a very excellent draftsman. He here prepared the working drawings for the machines required for a cotton factory at Germantown, and had them constructed under his supervision, and in great part by his personal skill and labor. When barely 19 he left Delaware to take charge of the cotton factory just mentioned, of which he had the management for several years. He afterwards removed to Philadelphia, and entered into the establishment of John & Coleman Sellers, making machinery for card sticking.

Mr. Peale now separated himself for a time from the strict line of his profession, and entered upon the management of his father's Museum. For this duty he was well fitted, on account of his administrative abilities, his taste, and his talent for arrangement, as well as by a competent knowledge of the subjects to which it was devoted. The Museum was something more than a place of deposit for birds, beasts and fishes, but was a collection of curiosities in art, in mechanism, and in antiquity. Mr. Peale, in the pursuit of his own profession, had not neglected other fields of knowledge. He was ever an ardent student and observer. It was not likely, therefore, that he should have been unlearned in any of the subjects which the Museum was intended to illustrate, and which he had heard discussed from his childhood. While not professing a particular fondness for natural history, he so far mastered the subject as to deliver lectures upon it, availing himself of the special facilities placed at his disposal. His mechanical genius, also, found room for display, in adding to the curiosities of the establishment. Many of us will remember his curious speaking toy, besides other ingenious inventions which cannot now be specified.

It was while engaged at the Museum that Mr. Peale placed there a miniature locomotive, the first seen in this country, and manufactured by his friend, M. W. Baldwin, on a plan agreed on between Mr. Peale and himself. It was put in operation on a track, making the circuit of the Arcade, in which the Museum then was, drawing two miniature cars, with seats for four passengers. The valuable aid of Mr. Peale was afterwards given to Mr. Baldwin in the construction of the locomotive for the Philadelphia and Germantown R. R., in 1832, the success of which led to the establishment of Mr. Baldwin in the great business of his life.

Mr. Peale's position at the Museum was of advantage in bringing his peculiar and varied talents more conspicuously before the public. The establishment was largely visited, often by distinguished men of our own and other cities, and many learned to admire the ingenious young manager. His society and friendship were sought after, and he assumed his proper place as one of the select band then most active among us in the pursuit of science and art.

The Franklin Institute, then young and earnest, as it still is in the advancement of knowledge, secured the services of Mr. Peale for a series of

lectures on a subject adapted to his special talents. He here delivered two courses, in the winter of 1831-2 and 1832-3, on Mechanics, or rather on Machines. These were fully illustrated either by the machines themselves, or diagrams, were novel in their character, and justly added to Mr. Peale's reputation. He was long an active member of the Institute, giving efficient labor on its most important committees, and at the annual exhibitions, and occasionally contributing articles on mechanical subjects to its Journal.

In 1833, Mr. Peale entered upon that connection with the Mint of the United States, which gave a full opportunity for the display of his special abilities, and through which his reputation was firmly established. Dr. Samuel Moore, then Director, conceived the project of a mission to Europe, for the purpose of examining and reporting on such chemical, mechanical and metallurgic methods and improvements, as might be deemed worthy of introduction into our Mint. He procured the needful authority, and appropriations, and having the fullest confidence in Mr. Peale, selected him as the agent for this purpose. He accepted the trust and sailed for Europe in May of the same year, being officially designated as Assistant Assayer. Mr. Peale remained abroad two years. The subjects of special interest to the Director had been the Sulphuric Acid process of Refining (or Parting,) and the Humid Assay of Silver, on which full investigations were required, but Mr. Peale was not restricted in his inquiries, nor in truth was he one likely to overlook any particulars bearing directly or remotely upon the broad objects of his mission. His intelligent, patient labor, mastered every detail. By partial reports during his absence, but more especially by a full and final report after his return, accompanied by plans and drawings, our Mint was placed in full possession of all that was then worthy to be known of the establishments, public and private, whose organization and methods affiliated them with our own. The direct results of the mission, were the introduction of the humid assay, some improvements in the details of the refining process, and the labor-saving method of duplicating working dies for coinage. The indirect results were perhaps, equally important. For the thoughts and labors of a man of genius in mechanics (as Mr. Peale was,) could not be concentrated on the details of Mint processes, without planning many valuable improvements. Happily for the public service, Dr. R. M. Patterson, the Director who succeeded Dr. Moore, (in July, 1835,) was Mr. Peale's warm friend, and a great admirer of his talents. His "mission" did not cease, therefore, with his return from Europe, but he became associated permanently with the Mint, for a time as Assistant Assayer, then as Melter and Refiner (in 1836), and finally as Chief Coiner (in 1839). His first great work was in the construction of the steam coining presses, substituted for the hand presses then in use. The first steam press was manufactured under his supervision, by Merrick, Agnew & Tyler, and turned out its first specimens in March, 1836. Presses subsequently manufactured for our own and other mints, have been improved in minor points, but their principle of action

remains the same. Other improvements which he introduced, were the so-called milling machine, for raising the edge of the planchet; the steam engines, small and large; the automatic or retroactive return of the draw-bench; and, in particular, the scales for the weighing of gold and silver. These last are models of simple mechanism and nice accuracy. So, in fact, was all of Mr. Peale's work. And we may add, that he brought to all the eye of an artist. It was not enough that a machine should be effective; it must also be graceful and attractive. "*Nihil tetigit quod non ornavit.*" But I cannot enter at large into details of his labors at the mint. I simply add my conviction, (which I know to have been that of the revered Director already named, under whose administration the work was accomplished,*) that without Franklin Peale, the most of that which attracts the admiration of the visitor to the coining department of the Mint would have been wanting. The mark of his inventive genius is here conspicuous, and I have often thought, as I passed through that part of the establishment, how appropriately might be there ascribed to his honor, the words, "*Si monumentum requiris, circumspice.*" But a more competent judge than myself, thoroughly qualified by long experience in mint affairs, has spoken to this point in words which I take the liberty to quote: "It has been my privilege (he says,) to visit the mints of London and Paris, and to witness their inferiority in their mechanical arrangements, to the Mint in Philadelphia. The superiority of our Mint is most manifest in just those points where his hand has touched, and when Americans visiting the mints of Europe, feel a pride in remembering the superiority of their own, they ought to know that to the genius and taste of Franklin Peale are they mainly indebted for it. At the mints of both Paris and London, he was well known and inquired for with interest."

Mr. Peale's connection with the Mint ceased in December, 1854, and he retired for some time from all public employment. In 1864, he was elected President of the Hazleton Coal and Rail Road Company, in the direction of which he had been for many years an active member. He continued in this office until 1867, when he resigned, and finally closed his long career of active business life.

I have thus hastily sketched the professional life of Mr. Peale, by which his public reputation was established; but any notice of his character would be far from complete which left out what we may call its æsthetic side, including those varied accomplishments and elegant tastes, which made him one of the most interesting of men.

We have already referred to the artistic hand which he brought to his mechanical work. This was a characteristic naturally growing out of his strong love and devotion to art. In the society in which he was brought up,—his father and brother eminent as painters,—he came to a knowledge of the subject rare among amateurs. He was for many years a member of the Academy of Fine Arts, which his father had been instrumental in establishing, and for the last fifteen years of his life, one of the Board of Directors, and a member of its most important committees. We are told

*Dr. Robert M. Patterson, the father of the writer, and late President of this Society.

by one of his eminent associates in the Academy, that "he was zealously devoted to the discharge of the duties assigned him, always observing a scrupulous regard for the interests of the contributing artists and pupils of the Academy. His courteous manners and almost feminine gentleness, made him a great favorite with the lady students especially. He was sincere in the utterance of his convictions, honest in action, and sound in judgment. His taste was refined and his ideas elevated. He was, in short, a most valuable member of the Board. His departure from the scene in which he labored so industriously and efficiently, has created a vacuum not easily filled."

Mr. Peale was an excellent musician, and I believe a self-taught one. He was endowed with a most agreeable cultivated tenor voice, to which the guitar was the appropriate accompaniment, and on which instrument he became a great proficient. His love of music was a passion, and in private circles and public associations he was foremost in promoting its cultivation. His house was for many successive seasons made charming to his friends, as the resort of the best amateur and professional talent of our city, met together to illustrate, in a manner altogether worthy the choicest instrumental and vocal compositions. Mr. Peale was one of the founders of the Musical Fund Society, to which Philadelphia owes so much as the means of spreading a cultivated musical taste among us. He was among the most active members in promoting its objects in art and charity, and at his decease was President of the Society.

In many accomplishments, Mr. Peale was conspicuous, carrying into these the elegant refinement so marked in his character, and lending also the aid of his mechanical genius. The graceful art of archery was particularly attractive to him, and in his efforts to establish it as an addition to our out-door amusements, I cannot but think he showed a taste and judgment in happy contrast to what has been exhibited in the development of those boisterous and half-savage games, cricket and base ball, of which we now hear so much. He was one of the founders of the club of United Bowmen, and a long series of medals and badges, which he preserved with some pride, attest a skill in which he was confessed the chief. His love of the art and affection for his fellow-members, was shown to the last, for by his special request his remains were borne to the grave by his associates of the club.

In another beautiful gymnastic art, that of skating, he was a proficient from his youth to the last years of his life. And it was, I think, an admirable sight to observe him, when past seventy, moving along with firmness and grace, happy in the enjoyment of his younger friends, and never so pleased as when aiding by his hand or counsel the fairer sex. He was President of the Skaters' Club at his death. And I ought to mention here that Mr. Peale was the inventor of Skaters' Reel, a simple expedient for rescuing persons breaking through the ice that has probably been the means of saving many lives.

But the activity of Mr. Peale was by no means limited to his professional duties, or to art and recreation. He was zealous in good works.

In particular, the Pennsylvania Institution for the Instruction of the Blind long engaged his sympathy and unwearied labor. He was elected a manager in 1839, served on its most important committees, and was finally elected President in 1863, holding that office at his decease. He was rarely absent from the managers' meetings, and presided only a few weeks before his death. His tender, affectionate manner made him greatly loved by the pupils, while his intelligence and the soundness of his judgment secured the esteem and confidence of the officers and of his fellow managers.

For some years before his death, Mr. Peale was greatly interested in that branch of Archæology which relates to the so-called Stone Age. He determined to make a collection of implements illustrating that age, and by energy and patience succeeded in accumulating over twelve hundred specimens, many of them very choice. The most of these were gathered by himself at the ancient homes of the Shawnees and Delawares, around the Water Gap where he spent many autumns; others were secured by exchange or purchase. These have all been arranged for easy examination on a plan devised by himself, and full of his characteristic ingenuity and taste, and he has left behind a manuscript catalogue with an introduction and full descriptive details which leave nothing further to be desired. It affords me great satisfaction to add that this valuable collection, the latest labor of Mr. Peale, is to be presented to this Society.

I have left to the close, what perhaps should have been earliest mentioned, all reference to Mr. Peale's association with our own Society. He was elected a member October 18, 1833, and ever after took a constant and active interest in our proceedings. He was for many years one of the Curators, and filled that office at his death. Our published minutes show many communications from him, on a variety of subjects, but of late these were mostly relative to the stone age, on which he was always heard with the interest inspired by his enthusiasm and fulness of knowledge.

Mr. Peale was twice married. By his first marriage, which took place in his minority, he had a daughter, his only child, who still survives. His second wife was a niece of Stephen Girard. She lives to lament the death of her husband, and I may not, therefore, refer more particularly to those accomplishments and virtues by which she crowned his happiness, and made delightful his home.

I have thus far considered for the most part the outer life of Mr. Peale, by which he became known to the public at large, but I cannot conclude without some reference to his inner life as it was disclosed to his more intimate friends. These, while they admired his varied knowledge, saw upon a close inspection other traits which made still more excellent the character of the man. Of these I may mention his gentleness and loving tenderness to all, but especially to the young. With children he was a universal favorite. He never wearied in contributing to their amusement or instruction. And this was no light burden on his time, for a toy from Mr. Peale was not such as comes from the shops, but all that he ac-

complished, from a kite to a complicated engine, was beautiful in form and finish. On occasions, and especially if a charitable object were to be promoted, he would don the costume of an Eastern Juggler, and astonish the young, and even children of a larger growth, with apparently miraculous feats, for which he had constructed apparatus of his own. Even to the brute creation the same tender nature was exhibited. A scientific friend recalls even now the self restraint with which, when a youth, ardent in the search for entomological specimens, he spared a water-spider, of rare species, that had shown a touching instinct in the protection of its young. He was always most ready in imparting information to inquirers whom his happy faculty and clearness in explanation gathered round him. An enthusiastic lover and explorer of nature, it was in the fields and woods that he became perhaps most interesting. He was familiar with the names and habits of plants, animals, and insects, and mineralogy and geology, and from the fulness of his knowledge dispensed liberally.

A marked characteristic of Mr. Peale was his untiring energy. He was never idle, always laboring on some systematic plan. Even his recreations were methodically arranged, and a part of the means by which his body and mind were invigorated for work. And with him there were no *small* duties. Each one was sacred. No temptation or pleasure could induce him to forego a responsibility. A promise was its performance. Punctuality was a prominent virtue, any infringement on which he regretted as wasting another's time.

Finally, Mr. Peale was a reverential, humble, Christian man. A faith better than philosophy sustained him in the closing hour, and he went calmly to his rest murmuring "The Lord is my Shepherd," like unto a little child trusting to a parent's promise. His dying words distinctly and clearly uttered were: "If this is death, it is as I wished, perfect peace, perfect comfort, perfect joy."

The vigorous constitution of Mr. Peale carried him in robust health to a term some years beyond that allotted to man by the Psalmist. For months before his death, however, he was observed to be failing, a fact of which he was himself fully conscious, speaking to his friends with perfect composure of his approaching end. He was nevertheless able, almost to the last, to attend to his accustomed duties, and his closing illness was but a brief one. He died at his residence, 1131 Girard Street, on the 5th of May, 1870, in the 75th year of his age.